Does Melanie Klein's concept of internal objects relate to Samoan writings on internal structures of the self?
A phenomenologically-oriented heuristic enquiry.

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Abstract

How might the cultures of psychotherapy and Samoa intersect and clash? In order to further understand my own New Zealand-born Samoan identity, I have attempted to ground myself in psychodynamic theory, eliciting questions about my professional identity. As ways of understanding the self and patterns of relating with the world can be viewed through the perspective of Object Relations Theory, this research utilises Melanie Klein's understanding of the internal world to examine traditional Samoan understandings of self.   This is an enquiry into the way my [inner and outer] worlds, both psychotherapeutic and my New Zealand-Samoan sense of self, meet, crash and negotiate with each other.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed_____   Date_____

Karlene Mamea   24 June 2016

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Chapter One Introduction

> "What was I doing? On a plane thousands of miles away from everything familiar, going to a land I had never seen? Well, a land I didn't remember seeing, I corrected."
>
> (Wendt-Young, 2011, p.1)

In asking the question 'Does Melanie Klein's concept of internal objects relate to Samoan writings on internal structures of the self?' I have identified three aspects I wish to focus on. For the purposes of this research I will include a selection of Melanie Klein's theory, the Samoan concepts of self within traditional stories, and my own experience. I have chosen to focus on traditional concepts of self within three stories; the young adult fiction novel *Telesā: The Covenant Keeper*, the legend of *Sina and the Eel*, and the song *Tatau Samoa*. These stories were chosen as representative of traditional constructs of Samoan perspectives, values and history, providing insight into the meaning attached to a traditional way of being and relating with oneself and the world.

This dissertation reflects my own difficulty in bringing my experience as a Samoan psychotherapist-in-training to psychotherapy theory. Much of the psychodynamic theory I have come across in my studies has been difficult to integrate with my own cultural context, and the articulation of this experience has been a driving force of this dissertation. My wondering about who I am within psychotherapy prompts questioning about who I am in a Samoan world, particularly as a second generation New Zealand-born Samoan woman, unable to speak the language of my ancestors. Finding ways to understand myself have interested me. As a foundational theory of the construction of self, my interest in object relations theory originated from my quest to understand the relationship between my internal and external realities. In my effort to find a way to make sense of my cultural identity, as well as who I am within psychotherapy, connections between the inner and outer worlds intrigued me.

As I have struggles to incorporate a psychotherapeutic identity, cognitive and emotional dissonance grew within me during my training. It was initially difficult to recognise exactly what my ambivalence related to, and whether an insecure cultural identity contributed to my lack of understanding. Although I was not able to fully reconcile my experiences of learning psychodynamic theory, I did identify fragments of object relations theory in myself, just as I recognise remnants of traditional 'Samoan-ness' in me at times.   This dissertation is a search for further pieces of myself through both lens, with a focus on the differences and similarities between both perspectives.

My wish to know more about the relationship between psychotherapy and a Samoan sense of self reflects my own experience of struggling to resolve feelings associated with identity and belonging throughout my life. I am endeavouring to explore and offer an insight into my lived experience of this struggle and ultimately hope that others from indigenous, marginalised cultures may find ways to recognise the usefulness of psychodynamic theory in understanding

their own sensibilities. Due to the personal aspects of the topic, I have chosen heuristic research as the method (Moustakas, 1990) and a qualitative and phenomenological approach as the methodology, formulated around my own lived experience of internal objects in creating my own Samoan sense of self. In documenting my interpretations, dreams, associations and reactions to the research, I will be using heuristic tools to make sense of the readings and the construction of my own identity and sense of self. In wanting to understand the core or essence of a Samoan psyche, I will be using a phenomenological focus, where I will describe personal experiences which pertain, or not, to the literature I will review.

A Samoan self in the stories

His Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi[1], *Tamaaiga*[2], raised as a keeper and guardian of 'Samoan indigenous knowledge' states "you need [the Samoan indigenous reference] in order to know yourself, to protect yourself and to find yourself in your search for meaning and for God" (Tui Atua, 2008). It is interesting to note that Tui Atua did not provide a concrete or straightforward definition of the 'Samoan indigenous reference', although I understand this as referring to traditional Samoan knowledge, that is ancient customs, history, myths, legends, *fagogo* (fairy tales, sometimes intermingled with song told at night to children), and spiritual concepts. Tui Atua is revered not just for his wisdom and chieftainship, but I imagine that his sense of the identity plight of many Samoans in the absence of indigenous knowledge is powerful. In the search to make meaning of my 'self', it is important for me to find out what constitutes a Samoan self using not just my mind, but my emotional, physical, and visceral senses as well.

I have considered two specific means of articulation of the Samoan self for this research; academic writing from Samoan and non-Samoan authors, and the articulation of Samoan self in a song, a legend and within a popular fiction novel. Academic understandings assist me to make sense of the expressions of self in the Samoan stories. I held the assumption that articulations of self through traditional stories contain subtle clues to largely hidden knowledge (to me, anyway). Many female characters in Samoan mythology are represented as either creative or destructive figures (Gabbard, 2014), and indeed the female characters in the stories I have chosen for this research display powerful aggressive and resourceful drives. I would like to note that I have chosen to discuss a traditional sense of self that is expressed through myths and legends as opposed to Samoan religious identity. My focus is on a Samoan identity prior to missionary contact in the nineteenth century (1830 to 1888), during which Samoan sensibilities were transformed through Christianity. In this chapter I will first summarise the Samoan stories *Sina and the Eel* and *Telesā* and provide the lyrics of the song *Tatau Samoa* in Samoan and English. I will then briefly outline Melanie Klein's object relations theory.

Telesā: the covenant keeper

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[1] Through this dissertation Tui Atua will be used as shorthand, including the reference list
[2] Title given to the holder of one or more of the four paramount titles of Samoa (Suali'i-Sauni et al., 2009)

This novel describes 'local ancient myths of the *Telesā* (originally *teinesā*) spirit women' (Wendt-Young, 2011) and the relationship of these myths to the main characters' sense of themselves. It highlights the struggle between keeping a traditional heritage alive in the face of the modern world.

This main character in this story is Leila, a young half-American, half-Samoan teenager, raised by her late father, who returns to Samoa after his untimely death to find out about her heritage and her mother, who she understands died when she was a baby. An interweaving of Leila's past and her present is painted against the backdrop of island life; the hills, beaches, lagoons, villages and school life. Her American upbringing is expressed through memories of her happy-go-lucky (and evidently idealised by her) father and her cold, wealthy paternal grandmother. In her search for belonging in the world, in the midst of her grief and loss, Leila hopes for a closer connection with her Samoan heritage. Thus her journey to find the essence of her being commences.

Leila moves in with her mother's sister and her husband, and she becomes acquainted with Samoan life through island cuisine, with strict orders to attend only school and church. Leila discovers an attraction to Daniel, the head boy of Samoa College which she attends; the chemistry is fierce between them. Leila also begins to experience vivid dreams, and a burgeoning fire inside of her, revealed most when she is feeling intensely emotional, and when she wakes from intense dreams of a beautiful woman with long hair calling her daughter, stating she will find her. When she discovers her mother is alive and calls herself Nafanua, she struggles to comprehend her father's denial of her and seeks answers to her questions. Her mother appears almost as an ethereal character in her glamour, power and seduction. She describes her father' kidnapping her to return home to the United States, and Leila later learns about a twin brother who died as a baby. Leila also discovers she is the chosen spiritual embodiment of Pele, the goddess of earth and fire, a *Telesā Fanua afi*. Leila discovers Nafanua is also a *Telesā*, although she embodies the goddess of storm, air, wind and lightning, *Telesā Matagi*, and alongside her sisters are *'Feagaiga sā'* – a sacred covenant, charged with protecting the lands of Samoa from human destruction, pillaging and misuse. Nafanua is the covenant keeper, the leader of the sisterhood and Leila finds that *Telesā* have gifts with the landscape; gardens, trees, water, which she has had a longstanding fascination with. The story ends when Nafanua's sister Sarona attempts to overthrow her as the covenant keeper by threatening to kill Daniel if Leila does not join the covenant killed. Nafanua is killed in a battle with Sarona, and Daniel washes up on shore after Sarona attempts to strike him with lightning to kill him.

An identity scuffle occurs between Leila's spiritual relationship the land of Samoa, and her physical relationship to the rest of the world. I intend to highlight the ambivalence Leila carries in relation to her identity in a cultural and spiritual sense, becoming torn between two perspectives and worlds.

Myth, Sina and the Eel

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the varying versions of 'Sina and the Eel' and that in retelling it I am endeavouring to capture its essence.

A beautiful girl named Sina lived on the island of Savai'i whose beauty was known far and wide. When the high chief of Fiti heard about her beauty, he wanted to marry Sina, and transformed himself into an eel, setting out to find her. Sina found the baby eel, keeping it as her pet, caring for him in a nearby spring. Sina and the eel would tell each other stories every night when she visited him and he told her he used to be a high chief. The eel began to demand more love from Sina, wanting to spend more time with her, and had grown so big that she no longer saw him as a pet and became frightened of his gaze. Sina decided to bathe in a different spring, but the eel followed her there and made her angry, so she decided to relocate to another village. She set out early whilst everyone else was sleeping, although she saw the eel at every spring she stopped at to drink, further agitating her as she realised he was following her. Sina decided to move to the largest of the Samoan islands, Upolu, and fled to a nearby family village, although she saw the eel following her as she moved from the western end to the eastern side of the island. At the village Moata'a (just out of the main town centre), Sina went straight to the *malae* (open space for meetings) and to the chief's *fale* (house). Sina sat between two of her cousins at the front of the *fale*, wanting attention and protection, as her fear of the eel intensified. The eel edged across the *malae*, confident and purposeful, and circled the *fale* in front of the chiefs, saying, "O beautiful Sina, listen to my words and in pity, fulfil my last wish. I am the Tuifiti (chief of Fiti) and I came to win you for my wife. I have lost the art of magic making and I am unable to change myself back into a man. I have one wish to beg of you; if I die, cut off my head and bury it in front of your *fale*. A tree will grow out of it, a tree, which will be very useful to you; when the *To'elau* (north east trade wind) fails to blow, take the leaves and weave fans for yourself. When it bears fruit, they will appear in bunches of threes and fours. Drink from these fruits when you are thirsty as every time you do, it is as though you will be kissing me." In an ensuing battle between Sina's cousins and the eel, his head was cut off. Sina, remembering her once fond feelings for the eel, carefully planted it in front of her *fale*, caring for the growing plant just as she cared for the baby eel. Soon, the first coconut tree grew, with its fruit bearing the face of the eel.

This story describes the origin of the coconut tree in Samoa and is important to a sense of self, giving voice to the idea that aggression, conflict and destruction can exist whilst maintaining relationship and connection. Sina's relationship to the eel is complex and she deals with the violation of her relational boundary – vā – through her connection to her wider family. I discuss the notion of the vā below as well, as a communal sense of responsibility as central aspects to the construction and existence of a 'self' in Samoan terms.

Tatau Samoa[3]

1.'O le mafua'aga lenei ua iloa	This is the origin we know
O le taga o le tatau I Samoa	Of the tattooing of the *tatau* in Samoa
O le Malaga a teine e toalua	The journey by two women

[3]See Appendix for Figure 1 and Figure 2

Na fe'ausi mai I Fiti i le vasaloloa	Who swam from Fiji across the ocean
Na la aumai ai o le ato au	They brought the tattooing kit
Ma si a la pese e tutumau	And their unchanging song
Fai mai e tata o fafine	That said women were to be tattooed
'Ae le tata o tane	And not men
2. A o le ala na tata ai o tane	But the reason why men are tattooed
I na ua sese si a la pese	Is because the song went wrong
Taunu'u I gatai o Falealupo	Reaching outside Falealupo
'Ua vā'aia loa o le fai sua ua tele	They saw a giant clam
Totofu loa lea o fafine,	The women dived
Ma ua sui ai si a la pese:	And changed their song
Faimai e tata o tane,	To say men were to be tattooed
'Ae le tata o fafine	And not women
3. Silasila I si tama ua ta'atia	Pity the youth now
O le tufuga lea ua amatalia	While the *tufuga* (tattoo artist) starts
Talofa ua tagi aue	Alas he is crying loudly
Ua oti'oti solo o le 'autapulu tele	As the tattooing tool cuts all over
Sole ia e loto tele	Young man be brave
O le ta'aloga fa'atamatane	This is the sport of male heirs
E ui lava ina tiga tele	Despite the enormous pain
Ae mulimuli ane ua e fefete	Afterwards you will swell with pride
4. O atunu'u uma o le Pasefika	Of all of the countries in the Pacific
Ua sili Samoa le ta'uta'ua	Samoa is the most famous (for tattooing)
'O le sogaimiti ua savalivali mai	The *sogaimiti* (Samoan males who wear *tatau*) walking towards you
Ua fe'iafi mai o na fa'a'ila	With his *fa'aila* (motifs) glistening
O asofa'aifo, fa'amuli'ali'ao	Curved lines, motifs
Fa'aatualoa, selu fa'alaufao	Like centipedes,
O le sigano fa'apea fa'aulutao	Like *sigano* (flowers),
Ua ova I le vasa laolao	The greatest in the whole wide world[4]

According to Wendt," the *tatau* and the *malu* (women's *tatau*) are not just beautiful decoration, they are scripts/texts/testimonies to do with relationships, order, form and so on" (Wendt, 1999, p.5). As an external expression of 'Samoan-ness', the markings in the *tatau* have often been

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[4] Translation from (Wendt, 1999)

adapted by those wishing to assert their Samoan heritage, different to the rituals and responsibilities of the traditional *malofie* and *malu*. I chose this song for its commentary on symbolism which I believe points to crucial aspects of the Samoan psyche.

Object Relations Theory

Melanie Klein (1940) stated that an infant "having incorporated his parents, feels them to be live people inside his body in the concrete way in which deep unconscious phantasies are experienced – they are, in his mind, 'internal' or 'inner' objects" (p.127). An 'internal object' describes a mental and emotional image of an external object that has been taken inside the self. I became drawn to the notion that I internalised my parents from infancy, and felt comforted by it. Since my mother's passing eight years ago, I continue to experience aspects of her; I can almost hear her voice and opinions, I have smelt her perfume, I have repeated her words in my mind, and it seems much of what I imagine to be her lives inside of me in this way. Klein also describes the character of the internal object as being coloured by aspects of the self that have been projected into it. Although Klein's writing focused on this process in infancy, a complex interaction continues throughout life between the world of internalised figures/objects and in the external world via repeated cycles of projection and introjection (Melanie Klein Trust, 2015). This description of ongoing developmental positions, helped me understand my responses to this research project, particularly during times of resistance, hesitance, and anxiety.

Personal experience in the research

In my attempt to resonate with the theory, my hope is that I will help to illuminate a clearer path in understanding psychodynamic psychotherapy. I want to communicate that it is entirely possible to understand oneself holding multiple theoretical lenses. In holding some trepidation about other Samoan academics reading my work, it took some time to recognise my fear that my 'Samoan-ness' may be reprimanded in some way. It is necessary to acknowledge that this dissertation is not intended to represent the experience of every Samoan academic or therapist. My fear of being exposed in some way, of not being 'Samoan enough' colours my emotional experience in writing and submitting this work. The understanding that my knowledge is legitimate, that I hold cultural as well as theoretical knowledge, has been pivotal to my progression through this dissertation. I am a Samoan whether or not I become a psychotherapist, and where my studies have asked me to turn away from a Samoan conceptualisation of self, I have struggled with psychotherapy theory.

In all honesty, I hope to find and articulate a close connection between both object relations theory and a Samoan structure of self as I believe that psychodynamic psychotherapy has helped me immensely as a client in a therapeutic relationship; and I hope to be effective for my clients (who have been mostly non-Samoan). Additionally, I hope that giving language to this distance and describing kinds of intimacy and connection in multiple ways may bridge all types of gaps within myself and between myself and clients.

Ultimately I would like to bridge object relations and Samoan worlds. On my research journey, contributions by other Pacific therapists on the Pacific psyche (Makasiale, 2007, Lupe, 2007, 2009, 2013) have encouraged me, in that I felt surrounded by others who understand the intersection of culture and therapeutic theory.   However, I did not come across writing on the relationship of specific psychodynamic theory and Pacific structures of self. I also want to acknowledge the sense of guilt I have carried at times. I have wondered about the legitimacy of my research, whether I am somehow making something so sacred less so by a kind of 'colonising' process. My wish is not to subjugate indigenous knowledge with Eurocentric ideals, nor to demonise object relations theory. My hope is that both constructions become more visible to the other.   I will end this chapter with a quote from a conference paper Tui Atua presented, which I believe encompasses the Samoan self, with an (albeit unintentional) object-relational reference;

> When Ga'opo'a (a wise elder of Tupua's family) said to me: "Tupua, bear in mind the land of our fathers", he was not talking to me. He was talking to the gods of my fathers who inhabit my psyche. He was talking to my ancestors, living and dead, who murmur admonition to my soul. He was talking to the land, the sea and the skies, the antecedents of Polynesian man. (Tui Atua, 2008 p. 211)

Chapter Two: Method and Methodology

What did it mean? Where had that dream come from? Was I losing my mind?

Was all the pressure of being in this alien land, searching for information about

a mother that no-one wanted to talk about finally getting to me?

(Wendt-Young, 2011, p.56)

In this chapter I will describe the heuristic process in phenomenological analyses to outline the methods used for this study.

Phenomenological method for literature review

Douglass and Moustakas describe the motives of phenomenology as "the phenomenological investigation attempts to reveal the actual nature and meaning of an event, perception, or occurrence, just as it appears" (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985 pp. 42-43). Phenomenological research recognises the subjective as an essential piece to the puzzle of truth, through the focus on the structure of experience. The primary goal of a phenomenological study is to illuminate meaning, structure and essence of a specific occurrence through the eyes of those who have lived experience of it. (Simon & Goes as cited in Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2010).

Similarly, a phenomenological stance originates from an insider perspective, and is focused on the essence of ordinary everyday phenomena (Nuttall as cited in Merriam, 2002a). It is through experience that the core of a phenomenon can be understood (Nuttall as cited in Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003) and I am interested in the way similar world views and experiences to my own can be interpreted in order to investigate the phenomenon of internal objects in relation to Samoan concepts of self. Phenomenology is therefore a useful tool in understanding the experience of a Samoan self, as embedded in Samoan stories. Structuring experience through analysis provides a way to understand my view of these experiences.

It is important for me to look at both the experience of self through analysis as well as my own connectedness to the stories through heuristic investigation, in order to understand my own subjective experience. The relationship I hold to this research reflects my journey through psychotherapy training, and the visibility of my process that allows both an 'inside out' look through the heuristic method, as well as an 'outside in' view through psychotherapeutic theory. In understanding the need for both a phenomenological view and heuristic method, it is useful to look at Douglass and Moustakas' comparison of both methods.

Table.1: A comparison of phenomenology with heuristic inquiry (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985)

Phenomenological view	Heuristic investigation
Encourages detachment to discourage bias	Emphasizes connectedness & relationship to the research

Permits definitive conclusions of experience	Depicts essential meanings and portrayal of the intrigue and personal significance than imbue the search
Generally concludes with a presentation of the distilled structures of experience	Involves reintegration of derived knowledge that itself is an act of creative discovery-a synthesis of intuition & tacit understanding
Focuses on structuring of experience	Participants remain visible and in the centre of the examination of the data
Ends with the essence of an experience	Retains the essence of the person in the experience

Heuristic Method

> The power of heuristic enquiry lies in its potential for disclosing truth. Through exhaustive self-search dialogues with others, and creative depictions of experience, a comprehensive knowledge is generated, beginning as a series of subjective musings and developing into a systematic and definitive exposition. (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 40)

As heuristic research begins with personal reflections, I started with formulations around my own lived experience, keeping in mind internal objects theory, while wondering how my own Samoan-specific sense of self had been created. My intention in this research project has been to interpret the stories and song I have chosen, using my felt cultural experiences of being a Samoan student researching Kleinian theory. My rather vague intentions evolved into more definitive discussions through persistent self-search.

Moustakas (1990) outlines six phases guiding the researcher through this 'self-search', stating these phases are not linear, that the researcher may move between phases, leaping forward to others and perhaps back again. Initially, I began with the premise that my question required a consideration of the way one phenomenon relates to another. Therefore, in order to deeply understand the question, it was necessary to become immersed in both the Kleinian theory of a landscape populated with internal objects an in traditional Samoan stories. Immersion and incubation may seem opposite to each other as the former requires deep engagement, and the latter a less conscious, more detached position. In actual fact, heuristics is primarily concerned with meanings, not measurements; with essence, not appearance; with quality, not quantity; with experience, not behaviour (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985). Heuristic investigation focuses inward on the felt experience of the researcher, as well as outward to the situation, rather than the relationship between parts of the outside situation (Sela-Smith, 2002).

Moustakas (1990) describes 'tacit knowledge' as a structure which interprets experience, and is composed of distinctive views, emotions, beliefs and values that govern behaviour. Although tacit knowledge is not normally available to conscious awareness (Sela-Smith as cited in Moustakas, 1990; Polanyi, 1969), Sela-Smith suggests that consideration is needed as to whether one's tacit knowledge is useful or a hindrance. My own tacit knowledge around my cultural self has led me to this research, as well as obstructed my approach to it. There were many times that I felt frozen with deep cultural shame and unworthiness. Lowenthal and Rose (2006) state the topic of a heuristic method emanates from the researcher's own lived experience and involves the pursuit of others' experience of the phenomenon. My cultural shame had not emerged as forcefully or as clearly in the last three years of intensive personal therapy and psychotherapy training as it has done during this research. Tacit knowing, it seems, precedes intuition, guiding me into new directions and sources of meaning.

A fellow student shared a quote found along her journey, "The heuristic researcher is not only intimately and autobiographically related to the question but learns to love the question. It becomes a kind of song into which the researcher breathes life… because the question itself is infused in the researcher's being" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 43). When researching the question "How does Melanie Klein's concept of internal objects relate to Samoan writings on internal structures of the self?" I listened carefully to the movements it made within me. I wrestled with its meaning, fought against my feelings for it, and hoped for a clean, simple battle. I wanted to understand Klein with a Samoan lens, and I wanted Samoan stories to be viewed clearly within Kleinian thinking. A critique of Moustakas' method includes neglect of natural resistance to experiencing unbearable pain, and therefore the focus shifts toward the idea of the experience rather than the self's experience of this process (Sela-Smith, 2002). This certainly has occurred for me where incubation has occurred due to my ambivalence about my experience of this research.

My journal documenting my experience and reflections in response to reviewing each resource links my external and internal experience, indicating a clear tension between my experience, the relationship to both my cultural and theoretical background as a psychotherapist, and highlights the influence of this in the research. The heuristic response is autobiographic, yet also illuminates social significance (Moustakas, 1990).

Loewenthal and Rose (2006) adapted Moustakas' six phases into eight steps. I chose to use Loewenthal and Rose's adaptation due to their further development of Moustakas' 'initial engagement' and 'immersion' phases, to include the explicit inclusion of lived experience in the research process, as this suited my enquiry into the experience or sense of 'self'.

Loewenthal and Rose's (2006) modification of Moustakas (1990):
1.   Research focus: define subject area of lived experience for investigation – from my experience, what is it that I wish to know more about? Why do I want to know more

about this phenomenon? Has this been researched before? How would this add to the body of knowledge in this field?

2.   Researcher's 'lived experience': record in a reflexive journal 'lived experience' of the phenomenon, for thoughts and feelings during investigation so personal experience is transparent.

3.   Identifying potential 'participants': asking 'what is your experience of x?' –use this question to stay with their/ to keep the focus upon the lived experience. Consider who is most likely to have had a lived experience of this.

4.   Recruiting participants: participants were not needed for this project.

5.   Data generation: only one question asked

6.   Immersion: examples recognised in day to day life. Thoughts and feelings from this recorded in the journal. Re-read data, look for commonalities, group together for presentation of findings.

   a.   Phase one of presentation: individual depictions of experience of phenomena

   b.   Phase two: Composite depiction group presentation of lived experience

   c.   Phase three: presenting exemplary portraits, individual stories.

7.   Incubation: reverse of immersion phase –switch off from subject.

8.   Creative synthesis: draw upon knowledge gained during investigation to explain for others; may be in the form of a narrative, story, poem, work of art, metaphor, analogy, or tale.

1.   **Research focus: defining the subject area**
   "Heuristic research… is premised on how an individual interprets their experiences" (Rose & Loewenthal cited Moustakas, 1994).

Rose and Loewenthal's (2006) development of Moustaka's (1990) 'initial engagement' phase demanded that I ask myself what I would like to know more about and exploring why I want to know more about this phenomenon.   I also pondered on my experience as a Samoan woman studying and practising psychotherapy. At times I felt alone and misunderstood, unsure of how I fit in the classroom and in the therapy room. Furthermore, I have rarely come into contact with other Samoan students or clients, resulting in a sense of isolation at times.

A heuristic enquiry contains a research topic which emanates from the researcher's own lived experience, and in pursuit of others' experience of this phenomenon (Loewenthal & Rose, 2006). In my search to find a reflection of my experience, I was disappointed not to find any specific writing on a Samoan cultural experience of psychotherapeutic theory According to psychotherapeutic thinking a sense of self can be understood through the lens of object relations theory, in turn my curiosity grew around how a Samoan sense of self is currently theorised, and whether both theories can be seen through each/the other's eyes.

2.   **Reflection:**

Researcher's 'lived experience': Moustakas (1990) recommends the use of a reflexive journal in which the researcher records 'lived experience' of the phenomenon, including thoughts and feelings during the investigation so that personal experience is transparent. I had continuing conversations with my peers at university and at work, with family and friends, noting down themes or persistent thoughts and feelings after absorbing the literature, audio and visual material involved in my research.

3.   **Data generation:**

"Heuristics permits and even encourages spontaneous creation of methods that will evoke of disclose experiential meanings." (Douglass and Moustakas, 1985, p. 49)

Loewenthal and Rose (2006) describe the importance of experience in interviews, which are typically conducted in this phase, and in the transcripts which are typically sent to participants. In my adaptation, I have written up the data I gathered from my sources (by using the text to answer the question 'what is your experience of a Samoan sense of self?') and from my own experience in order to present a narrative of the process.

In looking at the relationship, (if indeed one ever existed), between the concept of internal objects and the research on Samoan texts, key concepts need to be broken down. For example, terms needed to be translated back and forth from English to Samoan many times to discern their deeper meaning. In looking for keywords I had connected to whilst reading Kleinian theory, as well as the novel, I sought both Samoan and English terms that I believed linked to each other in some way, but also expressed the core meanings of what I saw in the stories. Key words and themes I intend to focus on include *mauli* (psyche or soul), *mafaufau* (memory and memories), *loto* (desire), internal object, external object, spirit, mother, father, internalised, externalised, projection, and introjection.

Douglass and Moustakas (1985) also describe the importance of tacit knowledge to acquire information in this phase, where "the tacit dimension is the forerunner of inference and intuition, guiding the person to untapped aspects of awareness… that elude analysis or explanation" (p. 49). Tacit knowing is acquired through persistent self-dialogue and self-disclosure. It also occurs throughout the immersion phase, through self-search.

Self-disclosure, whereby "an emphasis on disclosing self, sparks disclosure form others" (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p .50.) has been useful where conversations have unveiled ideas, opinions and awareness of my own emotive processes about this project. Upon presenting my project to others, the extent of my fear of the tenderness and sacredness of these stories was revealed. Words such as 'colonisation' and 'painful' stood out to me and reflected my will for a third possibility in a dyadic relationship between these two components of my research and original personal dilemma.

4.   **Immersion:**

"Immersion carries the sense of total involvement in a research theme or question… vague and formless wanderings are characteristic in the beginning, but a growing sense of meaning and direction emerges." (Moustakas, 1990, p. 47)

The immersion phase for me started in June 2015 when I began to deepen my understanding of psychoanalytic theory, in particular Melanie Klein's conception of object relations theory, through familiarising myself with writings by Klein and others' interpretations of her work (for example, Segal, 1988; Hinshelwood, 1991, 2012). A journal entry highlighted my early reactions to the immersion:

"In my confusion around the material [reading Melanie Klein's 'Envy & Other Works'], it feels difficult to access my feelings about it." (22/07/2015)

As I became further immersed in Kleinian theory, I recorded a dream which highlights my own unconscious integration of an infant's innate destructive impulses, becoming deflected outward and creating persecutory objects (Klein, 1975):

"Noticed dreams of natural disasters in the past three weeks; an earthquake, tornado, tsunami, as well as toileting dreams and urgent sensations to go to the bathroom. Perhaps the 'evacuation' describes the anxiety of the process of dissertation research, getting rid of the bad." (11/08/2015)

As my immersion continued to deepen, further unconscious material emerged in dreams, thoughts, sensations and emotions. However, immersion in the data came to a halt during November and December as a result of other academic pressures combined with a desire temptation to soothe myself by doing what felt easy and pleasant over delving deeper into the work. Sela-Smith (2002, p.58) describes "the inherent potentials for profound transformation within heuristic method as well as… resistance to any self-search that I initiate", pointing out that any resistance needs to be confronted and worked through before full discovery may happen. My experience of feeling stuck at this point was palpable; I knew I needed to move but was unable to face my own resistance and resentment toward the research. Both the external pressures of balancing employment, family and study, as well as the internal pressure of handling precious cultural treasures with integrity left me frozen with fear and shame related to anticipated persecution by Samoan elders and academics who I imagined would dismiss my work. At times it felt as though these internal persecutory superego objects would take over, even though I knew I needed to keep writing.

In January 2016 several experiences in supervision propelled me into a different mental and emotional space. Loewenthal and Rose (2006) highlight the importance of having further

support in order to work through potential "blindspots.", arguing that research is a component of psychotherapy practice, where in a supervisory relationship supervision occurs "with the intention of gaining a new perspective; gaining new knowledge on the relationship, knowledge that has the potential for informing future practice" (p. 138). In making sense of my distress, I gained empathy for my shame and fear, which helped to shift me.

5.   **Incubation:**
      "Knowing more than can be articulated shrouds discovery in mystery, lending intrigue to immersion in the theme or question" (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 49).

In the opposite or reverse of the immersion phase, it is necessary to take a break from the subject in order to allow new meaning to emerge, fostered by 'intuitive knowing'. Post Kleinians named this 'reverie'. This stage of research required a reprieve from conscious efforts of understanding in order to allow the emergence of unconscious knowledge. During this time, journaling and relaxation through quiet meditation and mindfulness practices aided me to do this.

However, the time and spaciousness required to carry out the stages of heuristic research can be unrealistic in the face of day to day pressures of work, community and family life. What has transpired are short periods of reverie; usually after I finished writing a chapter or had a week of immersion with a few days to relax afterward. I then noticed vivid dreams, new perspectives about the research in light conversations with others, or associations to the work when I watched a television programme or listened to a song.

6.   **Creative synthesis:**
Finally, in order to make sense of the phenomenological data, personal reflections and the literature, the findings need to be organised. In creating a large mind map, I drew out significant themes in the work, and began to draw a relationship between the words and themes. The terms 'relationship', 'connection', 'internal', and 'external' stood out as common aspects of the readings and I used these terms alongside my own meanings to draw results and conclusions.

Douglass and Moustakas describe 'realization' as a whole, assembled from pieces of data (1985). The process of sifting, sorting, looking and listening for meanings within meanings elicit qualities inherent within the data. Synthesis of this data creates a new reality as meanings are discerned from the data. The process means that data becomes general meaning, individual perspectives become universal knowledge, and details are analysed to gain the essence of the phenomenon. The question is recognised as having a life of its own.

Moustakas explains that knowledge gained during investigation may be expressed in the form of a "narrative, story, poem, work of art, metaphor, analogy, or tale" (as cited in Loewenthal & Rose, 2006). This dissertation includes dreams, poems and journal entries. As described in my

introduction chapter, there are three threads in this research: psychoanalytic theory (more specifically Melanie Klein's concept of internal objects), Samoan indigenous knowledge and my knowledge and process. In a way, this research illustrates the way these threads can be woven together; sometimes one thread is 'thicker' than the other, at other times the weave comes apart, and occasionally, it makes a beautiful unique design.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

> "We are covenant to many things, including secrecy. We cannot share Telesā
> knowledge with anyone. Yes, people know of us, they hint of us in their quiet
> little chats, revere us in their legends and frighten children with stories of our
> punishments, but ordinary people do not, cannot really know us and what we
> can do."
>
> (Wendt-Young, 2011, p. 214)

In this literature review I seek to examine writings from two perspectives on the structure of the psyche. Firstly, I will describe writings that pertain to the Samoan psyche; from those interested in looking at traditional life to those focused on identities formed outside of the physical landscape of Samoa. The next section of this chapter explores object relations theory, with particular reference to Melanie Klein's writings on the concepts of internal objects, introjection, projection, projective identification and her theory surrounding the Paranoid-Schizoid and Depressive positions.

Samoan structure of self – relatedness, spirituality and multiple realities

My analysis of the readings shows that they describe six main aspects to the structure of a Samoan self; relationships with others, communal responsibility, spirituality, use of language, personality/will/desire, and the acquisition of (traditional) knowledge. I explore each of these aspects below.

A Samoan sense of self has been described as a 'relational self' (Tamasese, Peteru, Waldegrave, & Bush, 2005), inseparable from relationship to others (Tui Atua, 2014; Lupe, 2013; Ellis, 2006; Tuagalu, 2008). Most prevalent in my research is the concept of relatedness and the importance of relationship as crucial to the structure of a Samoan self. The relational nature of a Samoan self is also elaborated on through discussions of the concept of the *vā*, that is, the "social spaces of relationships" (Tamasese et al., 2005, p. 303.), "the space between, the betweenness, not empty space, not space that separates, but space that relates" (Wendt, 1999, p. 224). Respect within relationships is important as alluded to be concepts like *tuā'oi* (boundaries), tapu (forbidden, taboo), *vā tapua'i* (spirituality of the *vā*) and *feagaiga* (covenant in relationships) (Peteru & Percival, 2010; Tamasese et al., 2005; Wendt, 1999; Tuagalu 2008; Iosefo, 2016; Najita, 2006). Breaching the *vā* is a serious offence, and there are protocols carried out to bridge conflict, with the aim to construct *tofa fa'amagalo* (wisdom based on forgiveness) and *tofa fa'amaulalo* (wisdom based on humility) (Tui Atua, 2002).

In my experience, relatedness is often affirmed by group conformity to activities centred around the church. The nature of important social relationships is based on longstanding traditions of synthesizing culture with religion; for example, the Samoan constitution is founded on Christian principles (*Fa'avae Samoa I le Atua* or "Samoa is founded on God") (Lui, 2007). Several readings mentioned spirituality in the construction of a Samoan sense of self (Lupe, 2013; Lui, 2007; Tuagalu, 2008; Tui Atua, 2002; Tamasese et al., 2005), and emphasised that belonging

or *fa'asinomaga* is pivotal to understanding Samoan identity (Peteru & Percival, 2010; Mageo, 1989).

Relationship with others is also dependent on a sense of duty and responsibility to one's *aiga* (family/village) or church through behaving in accordance with values characteristic of these groups. Values such as reciprocity, service, giving and courtesy pervade ways of connecting with others. Samoan identity is enshrined within one's obligations to family and community, guided by respect for the limitations between all things. One only knows oneself in relation to others and, as Ellis explains, "there is neither I nor one. And in the Samoan accounts, neither that I nor that one is single or singular" (Ellis, 2006, p.696).

Ingrained in a Samoan 'group identity' is compliance and tradition to social and often religious institutions. These institutions often become the hub for group activities and are reinforced by practices and customs attended by extended families and associated villages, affirming the relationship between group participation and identity. Mageo reports this social aspect as a key component to Samoan identity, stating "the Samoan superego demands that social mores take precedence over the more eccentric dictates of one's own personal ethics" (Mageo, 1989 p. 191). Socially irregular behaviour in a traditionally communal environment therefore relies on conformity.

It is interesting to note that several authors who wrote about a traditional sense of self held vast knowledge of *gagana* Samoa and *aganu'u* Samoa (Samoan language and customs) (Tuagalu, 2008), indicating traditional experience and views. Although traditional knowledge is crucial, it is also important to consider multiple contexts for those of Samoan descent is evident in the numbers of Samoans born and living outside of Samoa. According to Statistics New Zealand 2013 census figures, almost two thirds of Pacific people in New Zealand are born here in Aotearoa, and the largest ethnic group of Pacific people in New Zealand identify themselves as Samoan (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). The need for a fluid, open and holistic articulation of Samoan identity are emphasised by multiple authors (Anae, 1998; Anae, 2003; Wendt, 1999; Macpherson, 2001; Lupe, 2007; Lupe, 2009; Tuagalu, 2008; Taumoefolau, 2013; Mackley-Crump, 2015). A fluid identity accentuates the reality that Samoans are constructing their identities in multiple contexts, in conjunction with multiple cultures and ethnicities. Although an all-encompassing approach is ideal, tangible concepts of a Samoan structure of self are still needed in order to understand any relationship to Objects Relations Theory.

A variety of readings described specific cognitive processes that comprise a Samoan sense of self. *Mafaufau* (memory) and *'iloilo* (intellect) (Peteru & Percival, 2010) and the specific use of Samoan language comprise significant aspects of the Samoan psyche. In his conference paper titled "In search of Meaning, Nuance and Metaphor" (2002), Tui Atua describes how the use of words, language and tone is used to reiterate a sense of cultural self. The Samoan language uses allegory, allusions and metaphor in *fagogo*, *lauga* (speeches) and throughout rituals and

customs (Tui Atua, 2002). The role of chiefs and orators for each village are imperative to the health of the village, and through meticulous use of words used in *alaga'upu* (expressions) for specific functions (for example, the exchange of gifts for funerals, marriages, and requests for forgiveness), relationships of power, respect and reputation are negotiated. From my own limited knowledge, Samoan oratory is its own art form; skilled orators are revered and there is a language which is exclusively used for the purpose of oratory (Tui Atua, 2002).

It is interesting to note that relationship to land or landscape was not a major theme in the readings, even though it pervades the traditional stories I use in this research. Pulotu-Endemann, in his holistic health model encompassing Pacific values and beliefs states that context, time and environment are important dimensions to Pacific-wide values (Pulotu-Endemann, 2009). Representations of the land occur in various ways through traditional stories; in patterns used in *tatau*, in the use of symbolism in expressions, metaphors and stories. The relationship to the environment forms a central part of both internal and external identity - often Samoans will 'locate' each other through identifying village links (as in my experience both in New Zealand and Samoa). Perhaps an adequate description of the relationship of the Samoan psyche to the land was 'lost in translation', omitted in the same way that some words are inadequate, but close to the concept in another language.

Understanding Melanie Klein and Object Relations Theory
In my wish to find out whether the concept of internal objects relates to Samoan writings on internal structures of the self, it is necessary for me to discuss key concepts and contributions to object relations theory as developed by Melanie Klein.

Object Relations Theory
Much of the foundational ideas surrounding psychoanalytic theory are attributed to Sigmund Freud and his ideas of the development of the ego as crucial to psychic development overall. Freud used the term 'object' to describe that to which an infant is drawn in order to satisfy his or her physical and survival needs. Through her observations and analytic work with children, Klein created her theoretical base which differed from Freud in understanding the foundations of ego development as the interaction between life and death instincts, rather than libidinal impulses (Klein, 1952). Klein saw a drive toward relationship with other people, who are 'objects' of desire and attention and 'a component in the mental representation of an instinct' (Hinshelwood, 1991; Mills, 2006). From birth, the baby is driven to relate to an object -the first object being the breast, and, for Klein, there is an undeveloped ego at birth, but it is rudimentary and made vulnerable by the instinct-driven superego and id.

The nature of objects
The function of objects, according to Klein, are to satisfy the infant's drive to tolerate anxieties caused by the innate dominance of the 'death instinct'[5] over the life instinct, and for psychic survival in facing overwhelming anxieties, forming the personality. The early conflict between

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[5] Freud's earlier theory describes the drive towards death, self-destruction (Freud,1922).

both life and death instincts give rise to defences and anxieties (Segal, 1988). In Klein's view, the death drive causes anxiety from a fear of annihilation, and takes the form of fear of persecution (Klein, 1946).

The infant greedily and omnipotently incorporates the external object (breast). As a result of the greedy manner in which the object is taken inside in phantasy, a depressive anxiety forms, out of a fear that the object (the breast) being taken in has become damaged and fragmented. Later still comes the sense of me and not me (or the awareness of me and the other), of the internal and external world, that not all is inside or is a part of me. These are the qualities consistent with a developmental shift towards the depressive position.

During infancy, Klein suggested that objects can be part objects or whole objects, for example, the mother is initially experienced as a part object (the breast), and later as a whole person. However, part-object relations occur before the whole object is related to as a way of avoiding the ambivalence of the 'paranoid-schizoid' position, which will be explained further (Spillius, Milton, Garvey, Coube, Couve, & Steiner, 2011). It seems that the suggestion that the self can only exist in relation to other objects, external or internal, is a unique concept of Klein's career.

Internal objects are formed from early interactions with parents/primary caregivers with the first internal object being the mother's breast, before other features are added, forming the core of the superego. In her description of internal objects, Klein states, "The internalized objects are felt by the young infant to have a life of their own, harmonizing or conflicting with each other and with the ego, according to the infant's emotions and experiences" (Klein, 1952 p. 52). Therefore, the experience the infant has of an object inside himself gives him a sense of being, or existence (Hinshelwood, 1991).

Paranoid-Schizoid position
In Klein's view, the early anxiety in the oedipal stages is dominated by sadism, ushered in by the oral-sadistic desire of the infant to devour the mother's breast. The infant's oedipal phantasy is heavily flavoured by the sharing of the breast and the mother with other babies and with the rival father who is after the bountiful treasures that lie within the phantasised body of the mother. Consequently, the infants early defences (splitting, projection, omnipotence, idealisation, denial) are in the form of violent attacks; namely the projection of aggressive impulses and fear of annihilation from subsequent retaliatory attacks (Klein, 1930).

Hinshelwood describes the paranoid-schizoid position as "the struggle to achieve and sustain an adequate deflection of the death instinct, in order to feel confident of not falling to pieces" (Hinshelwood, 1991, p. 160). Occurring from birth until around the middle of the first year, processes such as splitting threaten to fragment the mind in response to the persecutory anxieties mentioned above (Hinshelwood, 1991). Internal objects and external objects are always interacting, and these early interactions are characterised by the splitting of objects into 'good' (idealized) and 'bad' (persecutory). Idealized figures are created in order to protect the

self against the persecutory ones, and also to protect the fantastically good from the fantastically bad (Klein, 1975). Splitting objects can leave the infant with a sense of being fragmented, also leading to the instalment of parts of the self into objects, causing a depleting effect on the self, where the self has difficulties introjecting good aspects of objects (Hinshelwood, 1991).

The infants first object – the breast - is taken into the self, or introjected, which forms the foundation of the superego (Klein, 1952, 1975). The subject then turns aggressive and libidinal impulses outward, into objects, a mechanism called projection (Klein, 1952). Projection is necessary in order to rid the infant of aggressive impulses, otherwise the infant would face danger of being overwhelmed by anxiety and its own aggressive impulses (Klein, 1975). It is also a crucial means for the very fragile ego to keep the good breast from being attacked by aggressive, annihilatory impulses.

Klein places great emphasis on the role and function of projective identification within the paranoid schizoid position. Objects which have had parts of the ego violently projected into them begin to feel to be the bad self which "establishes the prototype of an aggressive relation" (Klein, 1946, pp. 7-8). The object then begins to relate and behave according to or as if they are the bad projections. This process is thought to occur unconsciously for both the 'projector' and 'receiver', with the content being projected typically an intolerable idea or belief about the self.

If the persecutory anxiety caused by the dominating death instinct is not excessive and the life instinct is strong enough, the ego's awareness grows stronger and the paranoid-schizoid position can be worked through, allowing for more depressive anxieties associated with the depressive position (Klein, 1975) to come forth. The infant, in the paranoid-schizoid position, internalises what she feels is a loving object, and splits this off from the hated aspect of this object in order to keep the good object safe from the bad. Her mother's capacity to contain or tolerate her hated projections make it necessary for the infant to integrate both the good and bad objects, and the infant realises both objects are in fact the same person (that is, that the mother is both good and bad). The transition to the depressive position is not linear or final – in times of anxiety or distress, paranoid-schizoid states can often be taken up.

Depressive position
The ego's capacity for integration and synthesis means that hated and threatening objects can be loved, with guilt motivating restitution towards the objects (Klein, 1975). Ambivalent feelings towards the object creates distressing guilt that Klein called depressive anxiety. In the depressive position guilt and remorse are experienced for the damage done in phantasy to the object. At this stage, the infant integrates the loved and hated, the idealized and the persecutory aspects of the object, and thus moving from part-object relating to whole-object relating. The phantasy of omnipotent control diminishes as the object begins to feel more real. The earlier sadism makes way for more appeasing feelings, depression, fear of loss of the loved object and a wish to repair damage done to it (Hinshelwood, 1991).

In the paranoid-schizoid position anxiety is focused upon the ego being destroyed by bad objects, however, in the depressive position, introjection is intensified as the main cause of anxiety is that the infant's own destructive impulses will destroy the loved object (Segal, 1988). Although splitting as a defence mechanism (which can lead to states of disintegration) is utilised in the paranoid-schizoid position for reasons already described, repression is a more dominant defence mechanism in the depressive position. Klein stated that the formation of the ego was largely determined by the oscillation between splitting and repression of objects on one hand, and integration of objects on the other (Klein, 1975).

In this position, good objects and loving impulses are emphasised, the life instinct predominates over the death instinct, and introjection (as opposed to projection) is now at the forefront of development (Klein, 1975). A developmental stride in this position is the infant's newfound ability to recognise her mother as a whole object and separate from herself.

My personal response to the literature

I was initially unprepared for the ambivalence I faced from others, and eventually the ambivalence I held in myself, when discussing and researching Melanie Klein's work.

I admire Klein's contributions to new understandings of the development of the ego in psychic processes and my own experience reflects aspects of her work. Although my and others' responses felt difficult, scary and overwhelming at times, these feelings also felt necessary to this process and affirmed some of my own developmental processes. I became more aware and clear in my understanding when reading about Samoan structures of the self in comparison to Klein. I found myself thinking about my own infant life as well as ancestry when researching Samoan structures of self, igniting strong feelings of grief, sadness, pride and joy.

I also felt as though it was difficult to introject the theory (indicated by my last minute creation of this very chapter), and it is painful to admit that perhaps it was not as easy to see aspects of myself in the theory as I wanted it to be. As I read about Klein, I experienced blocks in my 'digestion' of the readings as expressed in my journal;

> **"In my confusion around the [Kleinian] material, it feels difficult to access any feelings about it." (22/07/2015)**

> **"Went to supervision yesterday, discussed possible ways of structuring Klein for my chapter… In another conversation in class, the topic of expressing oneself during this dissertation process came about. My stuckness became apparent to me, I became (embarrassingly) teary, was advised to communicate my stuckness – take photos, journaling, make something… anything!" (28/01/2016)**

I found it difficult to separate myself from the theory, and still have this difficulty, choosing to keep my personal responses separate from the literature review in order to clearly delineate the

boundary between what is mine and what belongs to Klein. This does indeed reflect strong remnants of paranoid-schizoid processes, where the projection of perceived bad aspects of the theory were expelled in my dreams, and I attempted to keep the good parts for myself.

Perhaps the failure to consider other relationships as primary to the infant other than a singular mother-infant relationship as pivotal to the development of the ego also made it difficult for me to completely identify with this theoretical perspective. In Samoan culture, I believe there are several primary objects playing crucial roles in the psychic development of the child and I wonder how Klein might articulate simultaneous primary infant object relationships.

Furthermore, a debate around whether expression of differing emotional states promotes health could be culturally dependent. The expression of 'good' and 'bad' (or positive and negative) parts of the self in internal objects theory exists in a Western European context. In some Eastern cultures, repression of negative affect curbs learning, and the balance of emotion is culturally valued as a goal for health instead of a need for ultimate control or ultimate expression of affect (Lee, Ng, Leung, & Chan, 2009).

It is with difficulty that I hold a relationship with the theory of Melanie Klein, and even though this is not uncommon, her ideas stood out to me enough that I wanted to see how much of them I could take in – how much would I be able to integrate the harsh Klein with the loving Klein? Just as a young infant has limited awareness of its mental functioning, I had difficulty articulating my process writing this dissertation. However, I do believe that Kleinian theory, alongside the heuristic method, has helped me to understand my own paranoid and splitting processes with Melanie Klein and my Samoan sense of self as objects.

Chapter Four: Findings - A sense of self

> "That brings me to the final gift. Yours. Earth. Telesā fanua afi. Earth fire…
> Your gift comes from the earth's core… Yours is the power that is most difficult
> to control… Your gift is intertwined with your emotions. Anger. Fear."
>
> (Wendt-Young, 2011. p. 219)

Through the examination of what a Samoan internal structure is, this chapter seeks to address whether Melanie Klein's concept of internal objects relate to Samoan writings on internal structures of the self. In reviewing the '*Telesā: The Covenant Keeper*' novel, 'Sina and the eel' myth, and '*Tatau Samoa*' song, I will discuss the way Samoan internal structures have been expressed and any relationship apparent between object relations theory and indigenous knowledge indicated by the Samoan stories. As I undertook this research project, it became clear to me that the construction of both the Samoan and Kleinian psyches must remain a flexible process in order for a connection to exist between them whilst maintaining individual integrity. This flexibility is expressed well through intersubjectivity theory, which allows for a third subjectivity that is created by the two unique separate theories of the Samoan psyche and internal objects.

Two psyches side by side

"When Pacific peoples reorient themselves psychologically to the Western worldview, their innate sense of trust is often weakened or broken." (Lupe, 2013, p. 214).

The Samoan soul or psyche has been described as translating to the word *mauli* before being changed by missionaries to the word *loto* –the essence or heart of a person, more closely related to emotional will/desire (Aiono-Le Tagaloa, as cited in Peteru & Percival, 2010). Religious influence aside for the moment, Milner (1993, p.141) describes *mauli* as "located in the region of the solar plexus… seat of the emotions". The implication that the emotional centre is in the pit of the stomach, not only describes a concept in European terms in a physical bodily sense, but also poses a diverse construction of self to traditional views of a psyche or soul related to the mind, brain or head. Lupe describes the Samoan ego as constituting a 'body/heart' stance, connected closely to typically indigenous thinking where the interaction between objective and subjective realities are carefully reflected (Lupe, 2007). This is in comparison to what Lupe states is 'a body and heart split' in Western notions of the ego, which is detrimental to a Samoan ego. This is reminiscent of the mechanism of splitting both good and bad objects from the ego, and how this weakens the already fragile infant ego. Bad experiences are supremely denied whilst good experiences are idealised to protect against the fear of persecution. It seems that the split of the physical and emotional is considered unusual in Samoan culture, and the interaction between them is what constitutes the Samoan psyche, similar to the cycles of interaction between internal and external objects, re-projected and re-introjected.

Several readings have compared the Samoan psyche with Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of the ego, super ego and id (Mageo, 1989; Mageo, 1999; Peteru & Percival, 2010; Lupe,

2007; Lupe, 2013). Mageo (1989, 1999) distinguishes Western understandings of self (the exclusivity of the mother-child relationship and the ego self) from Samoan structures of self, highlighting an exterior (Samoan) focus versus interior (Western) understandings of the self. Although this reflection is useful to my research, Mageo's research seeks to conceptualise Samoans through Western cultural ideals. Tuhiwai-Smith comments on the danger of anthropological studies on indigenous communities, "…anthropology is the one [discipline] most closely associated with the study of the Other and with the defining of primitivism" (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2012). This played an integral part of my emotional process, inducing feelings of guilt and shame, and fuelled my impulse to keep psychoanalysis apart from Samoan understandings of the psyche. At times I preferred there to be no connection between the perspectives, and struggled to understand how I would practice as a Samoan psychotherapist.

Me - the third 'self'

Intersubjectivity theory is described by Stolorow, Atwood and Brandchaft (1994) as being both 'experience-near and relational' with a focus on process. Ogden describes 'the analytic third' as "the experience of being simultaneously within and outside of the intersubjectivity of the analyst-analysand… created by the separate subjectivities within the analytic setting" (Ogden, 1994, p. 463-464).   The third area of subjectivity is the intersubjective, made up of the unique subjectivities of the first two participants, and is separate and different from the subjectivity either being individually, but distinctly created together. My desire for a 'third' recorded on 10/02/2016 (shown below) notes the interaction of being Samoan and a psychotherapist-in-training, and the desire for this work to express the intersubjectivity of both experiences. Space is the subject of the following poem by Iosefo (2016, p. 189):

<div align="center">

Third Space (JoFI)

3rd space birthplace

3rd space defaced?

3rd space misplaced?

3rd space headspace?

3rd space replaced?

3rd space someplace?

3rd space grace?

3rd space workplace?

3rd space

</div>

Iosefo (2016) further conceptualises the vā in terms of Bhabha's (1990, p.190) writing about 'the third space', explaining that both allow for "fluidity and retreat while staying in relationship". The Kleinian mother's containment of the infant's projection in order to allow integration of both good/loving and bad/hated objects comes to mind, where safety is found in this 'third'. It is this third, the containing entity, that I find a yearning for, within myself and in my research.

> **"Am I looking for a third, more comfortable entity between the psychotherapeutic sense of self and the Samoan sense of self?... A discussion today with someone who thinks Pacific people have 'failed to integrate successfully' (my interpretation of their words) into New Zealand society, in a nutshell, totally pissed me off - the pessimism applied to those who had eurocentrism forced upon them is unfair and oversimplifies an entire history… Does watching Tagata Pasifika, Fresh, reading Suga magazine, Telesā, attending Samoan language papers mean I've successfully integrated?! Integrated into what, anyway?!!!" (10/02/2016)**

Iosefo (2016) illustrates the impact on personal identity during an academic process similar to mine; "Combining and weaving post-colonial and Samoan theories together to address the dominant culture is congruent with the process of constructing and deconstructing my identity within the spaces of higher education" (Iosefo, 2016, p.190).

> **"Putting theory and Samoan writing side by side… are these two things closer together than I thought or have I become more confident in my position in these two worlds during this journey? Is this good?" (24/03/2016)**

Intersubjectivity, the 'third', and the *vā* in essence, embodies flexibility in relationship. I have struggled immensely with conformity (or the lack of flexibility in relationship) when interacting with my own sense of Samoan-ness, expressed in my journal and dreams.

> **"A lot of my identity sits in the 'not belonging' unique, different and actually 'better than' sometimes [cringe]. This is what I'm contacting here; the crash and burn and movement of it; I DON'T want to face this." (6/4/2016)**

> **"Dream 8/4/2016: I'm in a bar and feel forced to make conversation with a man whom I don't trust. My eldest brother is with me, and I feel a bit safer. However, he signals to me that we need to appease this man, even though we are both uncomfortable and feel his power over us. I realise I have no money to buy drinks, and my brother asks me to look again in my wallet; a stack of hundred dollar bills are there. I think 'how did I miss this?!'"**

It is feeling pressured to conform through discomfort, through feelings of inadequacy, and confusion that resonate with the construction of my sense of Samoan self. Similarly, my relationship with my older brothers best represents my experience of the *vā*; the space between us both physically and emotionally feels sacred, and demands respect. Peteru and Percival (2010) describe the word *feagai*, meaning to be opposite, although not in opposition. In terms of the word *feagaiga*, a covenant of respect between brother and sister, displayed through language and behaviour, can be described this way (Peteru & Percival, 2010, Najita, 2006). *Feagaiga* denotes both status and covenant, and the sister fulfils the role of peacemaker,

conciliator and intercessor where family conflict occurs (Tui Atua, as cited in Peteru & Percival, 2010). Perhaps my dream points to the power of my knowledge and innate sense of self as a kind of antidote to my feelings of disconnect to a traditional Samoan self.

Studies into Samoan behaviour shows a tendency toward conformity and away from individualism (Homes, Tallman & Jantz as cited in Mageo, 1989). Mageo states, "psychologically speaking, the Samoan gaze is directed away from the subjective dimensions of personality" (Mageo, 1989, p.188). Increasingly, I find myself wanting to hide my own experience of shame and feelings of inadequacy in thinking about my personal response to these concepts and terms. For me, the uniqueness of being a spiritualist-raised, New Zealand-born, non-speaking Samoan constitutes my Samoan identity, which by way of being uncommon created a stronger individuated sense of self. I became acutely aware of the threads in my research; internal objects, Samoan sense of self, and my own process. My struggle to hold multiple identities, and the desire to be able to do so successfully is captured in my journal.

> **"Supervision today highlighted my 'jokes from a distance' with clients, colleagues, my supervisor, everyone. This has always been my struggle all along; detachment versus connectedness, probably not uncommon though." (Journal entry on 29/02/2016)**

Being outside of the group in any sense brings on typical feelings of shame and discomfort as well as a desire to belong. My internal conflict is externalised and projected out through humour, easing my difficulty and easing others also.

In terms of the Samoan stories, I was struck with the projection apparent in several of the stories; in the *Telesā* book Leila's (literal) fiery rage toward her mother for not protecting her from her self, and for Sina, projection of anger toward the eel in her bid to rid her anxiety of her own loving feelings for him. Having read these stories after some time researching object relations theory, I began to experience my own reverie, touching upon my fear of unleashing my own potency, projections and disintegration. This was captured in my journal;

> **"…at times [it was] like I was her [Leila], I could feel her in my fingertips when I was falling asleep; choosing between TWO worlds, trying to find self… where is there room for me? Sometimes it seems like neither parts will accept the other." (2/1/2016)**

A sense of self in the stories

In understanding my own relationship to the current writing on Samoan internal structure, I am also able to understand my lens of the Samoan stories, and of object relations theory. In asking the question 'what is the experience of a Samoan sense of self?' when examining *Sina and the Eel*, *Telesā: the covenant keeper* and *Tatau Samoa*, key concepts emerged. Just as I

brainstormed, mind mapped and broke down concepts and words between English and Samoan, I applied a similar process to Kleinian theory as shown below.

Table.2: Key terms and concepts considered when reading the Samoan stories

Key Concept/Term	Translation/explanation
'Iloilo	Intellect (Peteru & Percival cited Aiono-Le Tagaloa, 2003)
Death Instinct	Strive for dissolution (Freud) Introjected hostile mother, (early version of superego)
External Object	Physical and psychological perception of 'real' object, distorted by projection onto it of aspects of self
Fa'alotolotolua	Ambivalence (Mageo, 1989)
Fa'asinomaga	Identity (Peteru & Percival, 2003)
Failoto	Defiance (Mageo, 1989)
Feagaiga	Covenant of sacred relationship, most often in reference to brother and sister (Peteru & Percival, 2003, Najita, 2006)
Fealoaloa'i	Mutual respect (Peteru & Percival, 2003)
Finagalo	Spiritual proclamations (Peteru & Percival cited Aiono-Le Tagaloa, 2003)
Internal Object	Mental and emotional image of an external object, taken into the self
Introjection	Taking into the ego part of the outside world, product of interaction between internal figures and external world
Life Instinct	Strive for survival (Infantile) wishes and desires of a sexual and loving nature (also synonymous with 'libido')
Mafaufau	Memory and memories (Peteru & Percival cited Aiono-Le Tagaloa, 2003)
Mana	Power (Peteru & Percival cited Aiono-Le Tagaloa, 2003)
Mana'o	Feelings/emotions/desires (Peteru & Percival cited Aiono-Le Tagaloa, 2003)
Masalo	Foresight (Peteru & Percival cited Aiono-Le Tagaloa, 2003)
Mauli	Psyche (Peteru & Percival cited Aiono-Le Tagaloa, 2003)
Projection	as deflection of death instinct, externalisation of internal conflict, product of interaction between internal figures and external world
Projective identification	Part of the self is attributed to an object - part of the ego is seen in another person and denied in oneself (both good and bad qualities).
Tapu	Forbidden (Tamasese et al., 1995)
Tofi	Responsibilities, duties (Peteru & Percival, 2003)
Tuā'oi	Boundaries (Peteru & Percival cited Tamasese et al., 1995)

Vā	Social space pertaining to relationships (Peteru & Percival, 2003, Iosefo, 2016, Wendt, 1999)
Vā tapuia	Sacred relationships, or space between all things (Peteru & Percival, 2010)

As shown in Table.2, common themes such as 'connection', 'relationship', 'internal', 'external', and 'boundaries' emerged. I will discuss these in terms of the Samoan traditional stories, and the role of myth/legend/song in the construction of the Samoan psyche.

Gabbard argues that a significant function of mythology is to reconstitute the creative power of the origin of the world. Therefore, the stories function as a moral lens, a "charter for belief in a sacred order of both the world and human society… setting forth models of correct behaviour, constructive values, ethics and morality" (Gabbard, 2014, p.245). Lupe notes that folktales or *fagogo*, express powerful symbolic language which carry important psychological information (Lupe, 2013), where powerful metaphors, inferences and symbols communicate nuances of cultural values, history and rituals (Tui Atua, 2002). *Mama*, according to Tui Atua (2002), refers to literal and symbolic food or nurturance, and fosters spiritual, emotional, physical and mental growth. Both *mama* and *fagogo* transport a sense of awareness of a cultural and physical self from one generation to the next.

Fagogo certainly offer potent messages through its characters featured in the stories. For example, Sina and Leila both demonstrate a struggle to maintain the respectful boundaries demanded of them within sacred relationships. Leila grapples with the discovery of her identity and the responsibilities inherent in her destiny as a *Telesā*. Nafanua asks her to embody, or internalise a legacy by acknowledging that she is the reincarnation of Pele, goddess of earth and fire (and join her mother's covenant of embodied *Telesā*). Leila is asked to blur the lines of her internal and external mother-object, and she projects (or rejects) her need for nurturing by betraying her mother. Although Nafanua attempts to control Leila, she eventually identifies with her daughter's yearning for nurturing, and dies in order to defend her. In other words, Leila projected her grief, anger and need to be mothered onto Nafanua, who began to act from this grief and anger, and nurtured Leila, when she did not ever intend to – she identified with the projection.

Mageo comments on the Jungian suggestion that spirits are psychological embodiments of autonomous portions of the psyche. "When a part of the self remains undeveloped and, therefore, unincorporated in the ego, it takes on a separate existence in the unconscious… the behaviour in question came, not from the ego and its values, but from another less developed segment of the self" (Mageo, 1989, pp. 189). Some of the most 'disturbing' parts of these stories can represent repressed parts of the Samoan self, pointing to the solitary subjective self, and its likeliness to be projected onto and into others.

Also indicative of projection and projective identification, is the negotiation of the relationship boundaries for Sina and the eel, especially where Sina feels the vā has been violated. The story also portrays the life and death instincts, whereby the eel's desire for a relationship with Sina (life instinct), collide with Sina's fear and wish to rid herself of the eel's affections. As Sina loved the eel in its early life, her internalisation of the eel becomes distorted with projections of her own fear and discomfort, and the eel seems increasingly dangerous to her, a persecutor. Sina's projection (of the death instinct onto the eel) then causes aggression against her perceived persecutory object, and she seeks his death. As Sina's own life instinct is not strong enough to contain this death instinct, she is unable to tolerate her persecutory anxieties, and cannot integrate her loving and aggressive feelings towards the eel and splitting dominates her psyche, whereby a binary position is taken of the object into good or bad (Klein, 1952).

However, the *feagaiga* also wields power where Sina goes to her male cousins and family members and Sina's projections can be carried collectively, in a sense. Sina's personal aggression is not processed individually, but expressed in a collective sense. Sina's prestige and status, central to Samoan society (Najita, 2006), remain intact in an environment where conformity for the group has cultural status over the desires of the individual. Identity and belonging is bound to *fa'asinomaga*, that is, to designation or role; it denotes rank and status, and dictates the relationships with others and the boundaries therein (Peteru & Percival, 2003). Sina chose her male family members, those of rank to help ease her distress and for them to defend her, as part of the collective, everyone has a role. It is here that the Kleinian concept of self is separate from a Samoan identity, where the collective self is concerned.

Similarly, in the song *Tatau Samoa*, a collective sense of importance is expressed, and asks those receiving the tatau (tattoo) to consider their cultural pride over the physical pain *"E ui lava ina tiga tele, Ae mulimuli ane ua e fefete"* (although it is very painful, yet afterwards you will be proud of it). The responsibilities which the *malofie* (male tattoo) demands requires resilience, as well as a great deal of dedication to one's Samoan-ness or sense of self. The *tatau* intimates the fluidity of internal and external Samoan identity, as the wearer distinguishes themselves from non-Samoan with the markings, and in the process of receiving *tatau*, often learns more about their family genealogy. Indeed, similarities may be drawn between this internal/external fluidity and object relations theory, where the 'taking in' of one's family becomes cemented and celebrated with external markings.

Ellis writes "[Pacific] tattoo offers an invitation to retextualize the well-rehearsed post-colonial text, [and] retheorize familiar psychoanalytic theories" (Ellis, 2006, p. 688). One's Samoan-ness in the process of negotiating with one's family, chiefs, tufuga (tattooist), is formed or disallowed in an inevitably social situation, whereby the receiver bears increased duties to community and culture (Ellis, 2006). At this juncture, it is important for me to emphasise the individual versus collective sense of self, where "I" does not exist. 'I' is always 'we'" (Figiel, cited by Ellis, 2006, p.121). As mentioned, collective identity plays an overt part of a Samoan sense of self, and according to Ellis (2006) also signifies allegiance to Pacific tradition and authority during the

colonial era. In short, the collective's influence on Samoan identity is more formative than one's mother and father (or introjection of them), implied by Klein.

Although the construction of 'self' in relation to others can have a vastly different context for a Samoan collective psyche than a Kleinian object relational stance, both express this interaction and tension between internal and external, or self and others. This tension will always exist; it requires fluidity to move between the collective, external, individual and internal spaces. The existence of a 'third' to be a container or negotiator in these dyadic relationships is not just necessary, but integral in order to allow movement and meaning.

Summary

Given the review of the literature, it is my opinion as a researcher that Melanie Klein's conceptualisation of internal objects relates to the construction of the Samoan psyche through traditional writings of myth, legend and song. External realities differ between the Samoan indigenous relationship to the land and the Kleinian emphasis on the mother and infant.   In this sense, internal objects have a weak relation to Samoan internal structures, as writings often emphasise external factors. However, the relationship between external realities and internal worlds of the individual are of interest in both perspectives, with relationships between the self and others the forefront of concern.   A feature of intersubjectivity theory as well as the Samoan notion of the vā are both concerned with the space in-between the inner and outer; and in relationships between people. This describes a general relationship between internal objects to Samoan internal structures, as there seems to be no overt descriptions of mental or emotional images and experiences of external figures in academic descriptions of the self, but traces in symbolic form in the myths and legends described.

Chapter Five: Discussion

> "Fanua [the land] needs you and the fire you hold. Can't you feel her suffering?
>
> Surely you can see it. Hear her cries for help?'"
>
> (Wendt-Young, 2011, p.324)

Ethnopsychoanlysis postulates that the mind cannot be considered independent and isolated from the rest of the person and is guided by the culture, and traditional therapies must be recognised in their rationality, even if it is difficult to understand their efficacy (Nathan as cited in Zanatta, 2008). Intercultural Therapy attempts to reconcile traditional healing and Western psychiatry (Zanatta, 2008). The assumption is that traditional or indigenous therapies are vastly different from Western psychology, and must find a way to co-exist.

The Samoan self and the Kleinian concept of self both share similarities in the search for harmonious, respectful boundaries (*feagaiga*, *vā*) between internal and external realities. A harmonious Samoan self represents a self in relation with others. A solitary individuated self becomes disturbed, separate and disconnected, leading to disharmony and distress. Melanie Klein does not directly address the collective self, however the 'third' intersubjective self comes closest to incorporating a communal self – this idea is more of a post-Kleinian development, pioneered by Thomas Ogden (1982, 1994, 2004). Furthermore, the implications of negating the socio-cultural environment in the construction of a Samoan self are explored in this chapter, with particular reference to several important facets of the Samoan psyche which were not in the forefront of the research. It is possible that the Samoan psyche contains a collection of internal objects, a family of objects both good and bad in structure.

Context and harmony

Although a Samoan sense of self includes the notion of the *vā* (Wendt, 1999, Iosefo, 2016, Peteru & Percival, 2003) and an emphasis on self to group membership (Ellis, 2006, Lupe, 2007, Wendt, 1999), I have not differentiated how a Samoan sense of self may be similar or different in other contexts, for example those born outside of Samoa, perhaps second, third and fourth generation New Zealand, Australian, American or Hawai'ian born Samoans, as well as those of mixed descent, and those who possess some or no level of Samoan language. As I have mentioned, the emphasis and importance of land to Pacific Island cultures persists, although the people's relation to the land is ever changing.

The influence of multiple realities faced by Pacific peoples in New Zealand is described by Anae (1998) in what she names "identity journeys", where she identifies a number of environment/context-specific factors that influence cultural identity. In particular, Anae describes 'identity confusion', where the clash of disorder and struggle experienced by New Zealand-born Samoans, exists within ordered structures of *Fa'aSamoa*, church and identity (Anae, 1998). Furthermore, the adaption and diversification of lifestyles in New Zealand (and typical to diaspora communities) indicates intergenerational differences of experience and identity for Pacific people worldwide (Macpherson, 2001). Sammut and colleagues claim that

groups who have suffered cultural exploitation have a fragmented cultural grounding, which in turn creates an ill-defined collective identity (Sammut, Daanen, & Moghaddam, 2013). Naturally where collective ideals and values exist in another land, the time taken to adjust, adapt, take on and assert cultural identity can be painful.

Living amongst multiple contexts and values creates many challenges to the construction of identity. Taumoefolau states "the situation of those who are New Zealand-born and raised is not that they are totally different from the island-born in their values and beliefs, but that they live a life of in'-betweenness" (Taumoefolau, 2013, p.120). Full membership to either a New Zealand or a Pacific group is not permitted creating tension and confusion. The authors I have included in this research are mostly either New Zealand-born Samoans or have most of their life experience in New Zealand, indicating the search for my own identity. I resonated with the struggles characteristic of a Samoan woman in an academic setting, as highlighted by several authors (Anae, 2003, Iosefo, 2016), and the tension that comes with a need to define oneself. However, the variation between researching and appreciating the differences in a Samoan psyche and an object relational psyche have been blurred for me. Appreciating the context of each, i.e. why these differences exist, fails to address the necessity for them to sit separately at times. I often avoided the clash of the two psyches in my research, to keep the peace in me, leaving each alien to the other and maintaining (a false sense of) control in unknown territory.

New Zealand born Pacific Island therapists may naturally feel obliged to conform to Western approaches if they are detached from, and unaware of, their own culture. New Zealand born Pacific Island therapists are now making an effort to explore 'who they are' as part of their cultural and professional development in working with Pacific Island clients (Lupe, 2009). The Samoan word for this need is *fa'asinomaga*, which means the 'ability to seek and get to know oneself and one's role in society as a first step to the development of one's sense of identity' (Menon cited Mulitalo-Lauta, 2001, p.26). In comparison, it is interesting to note that Klein described the idea of the epistemophilic instinct, that is, the impulse to know, and to possess knowledge (Klein, 1930).

In reference to a Samoan spiritual self, Tui Atua emphasises the concept of peace, stating 'A search for peace is a search for harmony… The harmony of Self is crucial as it acts as the impetus for the other harmonies [harmony with the cosmos, environment, and with one's fellow men]' (Tui Atua, cited by Tuagalu, 2008, p.115). One of the infant's developmental tasks is, according to Klein, a need to keep the gratifying and the frustrating breasts separate before a fluid movement between integration and disintegration of both good and bad signifies a different perspective of harmony. In comparison Tui Atua's quest for harmony begins from a state of disharmony in order to experience peace and comfort. Tui Atua is describing a search for synchronization of external factors, directly relating to the harmony within oneself. Conversely, Klein is pointing to an integrative process that moves towards the depressive position, where the same object is experienced both in terms of good and bad. Harmony becomes a matter of integration rather than synchronization.

A collective identity

I have mentioned a collective identity as a primary influence on the Samoan self. In particular, cultural identity provides a template that informs all parts of an individual's life including (amongst many other factors) permissible ways of relating with the world, whilst providing a set of values and ways to pursue goals based on cultural values (Sammut et al., 2013). If cultural identity provides the template for the Samoan psyche then for those struggling with their concept of culture, or what it is to be Samoan, there is likely to be a disruption to the formation of personal identity. The internalisation of external (communal cultural) objects is therefore distorted and insecure if there is too much dissonance in cultural identifiers. Similarly, Melanie Klein argues that every external object taken in is a distorted representation of reality (as cited in Segal, 1988). For the Samoan psyche, internal objects become dependent on multiple external objects, in that one finds a sense of self in their obligations and service to their community.

A communal sense of self is held together in Samoan custom through its use of particular linguistic tools. Symbolism and allusion is demanded in social intercourse, where saving the collective face of family (including ancestors and village), keeping peace and the search for harmony is of utmost importance (Tui Atua, 2009). The potential to offend with crass directness means that insinuation and allegory pervade language, custom and space. Lupe (2009) writes that the English language is clear and direct, in opposition to the metaphoric style of Samoan language, indicating a reliance more on communication of the heart, rather than the mind. Furthermore, protocols in special events use metaphors and similes, as well as the use of stories to communicate meaning, emotions and connection in stories. A Pacific person hears and learns this way all through life and when working therapeutically, and according to Makasiale, "mutual understanding is deepened and expanded" (Makasiale, 2007, p. 114), when a therapist is attuned to the Pacific client's symbolism.

Furthermore, through a collective face, a person divulges 'we-ness' rather than 'I/me-ness' or individual self, emphasising a sense of community and continuity (Lupe, 2009). The limitations of this were pointed out by Lupe who warned that uniformity can become the way of being, and the person becomes lost to the collective where individuality becomes unacceptable. Mageo also makes the distinction between Western emphasis on infantile relationships and a Samoan emphasis on connection, "In the West the structure of early relationship, attitudes and sanctions all emphasize the ego self. In Samoa, however, they underscore a message of relatedness and interdependence" (Mageo, 1989, p.185). As long as the concept of a Samoan self does not rely on a rigid structure, multiple realities can be acknowledged and the Samoan identity will be fluid.

Fluidity & Tension

Danger exists in this project of assigning privilege to psychotherapeutic theory over indigenous knowledges, particularly where I strive to make it through a Masters in Psychotherapy, rather than a Masters in indigenous Pacific Knowledge (several papers in my undergraduate degree in

Pacific history pale in comparison to the degree of immersion I experienced in this research project.   After presenting the intentions and progress of my research, I began to face the reaction of others to my work, and the way a proposed relationship between Eurocentric and Indigenous models evoke agonizing historical processes of colonisation and slavery. Confronted with the question of whether it is ethical to put indigenous knowledges next to Eurocentric theory, I reflected in my journal;

"Words that stood out to me from my dissertation presentation; 'colonisation', 'painful'… Am I compromising the integrity of the stories?" (10/02/2016)

I began to fear that I had breached the vā between the two parties – and so began to consider how to articulate the division between the two as a respectful boundary. Samoan psychotherapist Karen Lupe states the danger in ignoring the existence of two separate psyches is the risk of subtly repeating a colonising process of 'whitening' (2007). "The failure to appreciate the psychological differences of another culture leaves them as the alien other, in essence unknown and hence targets for shadow projection" (Lupe, 2007, p.130). That is, the undesirable aspects of one's culture become attributed to another culture as originating from the 'receiver' culture. In the avoidance of underestimating the legitimacy of the Samoan psyche, I felt as though I did not want to put object relations theory side by side with Samoan aspects of self at all. The question as to whether a comparison of (arguably little known) indigenous models of knowledge to a widely taught European model is ethical clouded my excitement for this research at times.   In choosing not to research the relationship between different cultures represented in the stories I have researched, particularly in Wendt-Young's 'Telesā' in which cultural tension is a primary theme, I have not considered the influence and importance of issues specific to those who identify with multiple cultures in addition to their Samoan ethnicity.

In my own personal attempt to reconcile both my own psychotherapeutic and cultural selves, I had underestimated the importance for me to acknowledge the necessity of their separateness. I have no desire for this project to become a critique of either lens, but a comment on the dangers of choosing one as superior over the other. Though the shadow projection expresses itself in the temptation to idealise Samoan stories in opposition to object relations theory, Lupe (2009) warns that a danger of assimilating the Western world-view involves conscious disconnection to the body and heart. My ability to hold both theory and culture side by side was coloured by the mix of feelings I carried about my own lack of indigenous knowledge and whether I even understood what a 'Samoan self' is, with concerns that my fear of not being 'Samoan enough' would render me feeling inferior, unable to measure up to a definitive Samoan. After all, my ingestion of object relations theory came with feedback and encouragement on how to improve.   I learnt about being a Samoan (or what a Samoan should be) through exclusion from a Samoan world in which I'm told I should belong. This tension with identity is the subject of the following poem by Karlo Mila (2008, p.11):

Inside us the dead (the New Zealand-born version) (for Al Wendt)

Albert said, inside us the dead.
Maybe I wouldn't feel so lonely
if my body could recall those connections
there are only silences.

I am
bound
this place
time and space
the vā with the past is broken.

Even when pregnant
my body feels like a ship lost in water
afloat, remote, solitary and
heaving with seasickness.

I did not feel the mercury line
connecting those before me
to their destiny.

I am not capable of thinking
this blood is a ripple
in an ocean
of our blood/I am
the next wave
of a tide that has been coming
for a long time/this vein
leads back to my bones.

This is what I have learned from books.
I am an individual.

But I suspect my body remembers you all.

The curve of my legs,
the shape of my fingers,
the face of my son,

yes, every limb,
every bend
every bone

is a recollection of

who has been before.

A memory

of all the bodies that have been

the making of me.

Inside us the dead.

Object relations theory/Klein, Intersubjectivity and the *Vā*

As discussed above, a major difference in the concept of self as described by object relations theory and Samoan indigenous knowledge is the primacy of the collective self. However, both a collective and individually focused psyche have underlying understandings of self that emphasise the relationship of the internal and external worlds. The collective identity's emphasis on the external relationship means that the identity of the prescribed group (culture, religion, etc.) is most significant and must remain so in order for a personal identity to form (Taylor as cited in Sammut et al., 2013). Recognising the unconscious in another is to understand a self and an 'other' as separate and a subsequent relationship between oneself and another, you and I/me, *o oe ma ia te a'u*, whilst recognising a simultaneous joining of self and other. This recognition, I believe, is inclusive of multiple constructions of self whether internally or externally located.

In contrast, the object relational understanding of self purports that the interaction between external reality and unconscious phantasies determine the development of the psyche. Object relations theory's emphasis on the connection between the internal and external worlds of the infant requires a retrospective view of the creation of a 'self', and places great importance on the formative nature of the relationship between mother and infant. The assumption that this imperative relationship is a singular one diverges from the possibility of collective identity being formed in these early stages.

This is problematic for the *vā*, which focuses on the space between self and others from an insider viewpoint (Tuagalu, 2008).   This insider viewpoint describes the space between self and multiple others, in order for the vā to impute cultural values of *fa'aaloalo* (respect) and *alofa* (love) (Tui Atua, 2009), conveyed through a sense of intimacy, sacredness and spirituality (Tuagalu, 2008). The *vā* allows a sense of fluidity between self and other, making space for the inclusion of multiple 'selves', indeed a 'social space' in reference to relationships (Peteru & Percival, 2003; Iosefo, 2016; Wendt, 1999).

However, neither a focus on a (Kleinian or Samoan) self and other as separate, nor as inseparable with multiple others seems adequate in understanding and constructing a holistic sense of self.   In some non-Western cultures early infant experience does not familiarise the child with its separation from those around him, but orients the child toward relatedness, in

preparation for the development of a self in a social role, as the child is typically cared for by various family members (Mageo, 1989).

Nevertheless, conceptualising the self requires the often painful and tense mental separation from others to recognise self, and both Kleinian and Samoan indigenous perspectives acknowledge this tension in different ways.   Much has been written about the process of constructing multiple identities in order to understand self from a Samoan perspective (Anae, 1998; Anae, 2003; Lupe, 2009; Mackley-Crump, 2015; Macpherson, 2001; Mila, 2008), all expressing to some degree a painful need for flexibility and a move away from a rigid prescription to being Samoan. Klein's in-depth reflections on the infant's necessity for dependence and defence against separation involve the complex process of attributing parts of the self 'into' another (projective identification). A fundamental aversion to the painful experiences (sometimes in response to separation) is articulated in both theoretical views.

One way in which the infant rids itself of hated parts of the self is through projective identification, where the infant projects bad parts into the mother and she identifies with them and begins to act accordingly (Klein, 1946). Ogden states projective identification affords the understanding that one person makes use of another in order to contain an aspect of themselves (Ogden, 1982). Ogden's concept of intersubjectivity as 'interpersonal relations' rather than object relations addresses the 'in-between' space as a third and important aspect between self and other and considers the 'quality of mutual recognition' (Benjamin as cited by Sammut et al., 2013). Of importance is Ogden's attempt to bridge the intrapsychic and interpersonal (Russell, 2005) as he describes the projector having recovered a modified version of what was projected. In relation to a therapeutic context, he highlights the need for the therapist to be able to tolerate such projections. Although such resilience is not easily acquired, my attempt to adapt Ogden's conception of this process to include a collective identity implies that the receivers (whom Ogden identifies as the therapist/s) may include multiple familial elders, chiefs, pastors and siblings. The receiver of projective identification may draw on resources such as self-knowledge (or therapy experience), specialist (theoretical or cultural) knowledges, and language (including sayings, metaphor, song and chants) in order to facilitate their own and the other's psychological growth.

However, if the construction of self is recognised as a process of interaction between self and other with the understanding of the vā as an important and formative 'third' in the room, I propose that there are culturally competent tools to utilise this understanding. This may include the physical, spiritual or mental representations of pivotal figures (note there will usually be multiple people here) in the therapy, the awareness of the ways in which the therapist's social, cultural and theoretical privilege are ascribed by the client, and the pervasion of concepts of respect, sacredness and service. These factors will undoubtedly affect the vā in the relationship and an intersubjective approach to understanding a Samoan psyche with such psychoanalytic concepts will require a malleable approach, case-by-case sensibilities, and the understanding of how one understands and utilises the vā individually.

Personal experience

> **"Dream 22/4/2016: I'm holding my own infant baby and there are slugs everywhere, on my head, on the bed – gross! I'm trying to find a quiet room to soothe and feed my baby who is restless at a busy family function – I notice I have a jerking way of trying to move the baby around but I don't mean to be rough, I know I can be softer!"**

I have had many thoughts about being a better 'mother' to my dissertation, have recognised many distractions and fought to believe I have the skills or knowledge to do a good job. Mostly, I have struggled to soften to this process; to become confident in my strength. In this field, I am learning that this also means revealing my vulnerability, just enough to let the reader into my world. I recollect my own experiences in therapy, where the intimacy of connecting to one person felt overwhelming and initially intrusive compared with the process of navigating group membership and relationship. Finding the space to tend to the baby has felt challenging at times, not just due to other life obligations, but due to the difficulty in finding the quiet room within myself.

In my dream I was not afraid of the unwanted slugs, but I knew I had to face them, touch them, in order to get them off me. Besides, I had a bigger goal in mind, to protect the baby. Perhaps the threat to fostering the growth and progression of this project has been my own trepidation of not being a 'good-enough mother' (Winnicott, 1953). A student of Klein, Winnicott perceived the role of the good-enough mother to be complete adaptation to her infant's needs at first, lessening this adaptation over time in order for the infant to grow in her ability to deal with mother's failure (1953). Perhaps the dream was about my insecurities; a comment on my ability to adapt to the demands (of resilience) in doing the research and integrating what I have learnt. The slugs are my feelings of not being culturally fluent enough to write about a Samoan sense of self, nor competent enough in psychotherapy to write a dissertation.

Initially, it was easier to keep object relations and the Samoan stories apart; to conceptualise indigenous knowledge as 'too sacred to be examined'. Due to the idealisation of indigenous knowledge, it was easier to demonise a theory that contrasted with it. Indeed, it was easy to project both my fear of violating the vā between two very separate entities, as well as being taken over, inhabited by a dominating Western alien.
In the desire for instant and easy integration of both theories, it took some time to accept the necessary separation of these threads of my research, at least at first. Eventually it became easier to bring both sides of the research closer and periodically I fell into simplistic romanticising of one side whilst devaluing the other.

It was not, of course, a coincidence that I found myself in a Kleinian-esque situation that, perhaps true to an infant experience, I could not think about, only feel at first. Initially unintegrated and fragmented, the ego becomes split in the paranoid-schizoid position, which

functions to preserve good objects and build resilience (Spilius, Milton, Garvey, Coube, Couve, & Steiner, 2011). It seemed that my insecure sense of 'Samoan-ness' was initially fragmented, and goes back and forth in a process whereby good aspects are kept for me, whilst bad aspects are projected into to others (for example, in the form of me feeling negatively judged by others for not speaking Samoan). Perhaps my Samoan self needed to be built up, given confidence and strengthened in order to become more integrated, open for research in my mind (reaching the depressive position). Although I have become better able to hold both threads of this project together without complete disintegration, asserting cultural knowledge as my own still feels uncomfortable and perhaps always will in some respects.

Chapter six – Concluding thoughts

"I had never wished so hard for fire. I had never prayed so fervently for the

Gods to hear me. I begged the earth to hear me."

(Wendt-Young, 2011, p.393)

This dissertation asked the question 'does Melanie Klein's concept of internal objects relate to Samoan writings on internal structures of the self?' and further explores the relationship that I have found between them.   Finding a way to connect indigenous knowledge and Western understandings of self is important due to the reality that cross-cultural therapy is a frequent occurrence, and finding a way of using theories which can underpin both perspectives is an imperative. Bowden (2010, p.6) suggests that vast changes in counselling practices need to be made to accommodate the Pacific worldview, including "movement and influence within, around, and beyond each person [client and counsellor]". Object relations theory addresses this movement in the concept of internal and external objects.

Indeed, there are different views on the way non-Western cultural knowledge may coincide with psychotherapy. Although material by Melanie Klein is easily accessible as is academic writing on the Samoan self, to my knowledge there has not been any writing exploring the possible intersection between object relations theory and Pacific Island cultural knowledges.

The interaction between objects highlights the relationship between the internal and external worlds, connecting an individual with their primary figures. The fluidity of the objects described by Melanie Klein correlates with the flexibility with which the Samoan self is built, in terms of relationship between self and others, as well as land and culture. Thus a relationship between the two exists; the living reference Tui Atua speaks of above is encoded in one's heritage – not just cultural traditions but also ancestry, where infant life must be influenced by the infant life of one's parents, grandparents, and those before them.

However, where Samoan structures of the self acknowledge ancestral culture in terms of rituals, language, customs and land, Klein's emphasis remains on infant anxiety with reference to the formation of the personality (from Freud's concept of the ego, superego and id). Although both perspectives emphasis the fluidity between inner and outer, the lens with which the self is constructed is focused differently.

Therapeutic implications of the findings

The understanding of the fluidity between inner and outer realities has great implications for psychodynamic psychotherapy involving Samoan people as therapists, clients or both. Non-Samoan therapists working with Samoan clients need to consider the potency of the relationship the client is likely to have with their family – including wider extended family and church groups. This may bring about new understandings of the role that guilt and shame may play for the client in the articulation of his or her difficulties. Guilt, shame and anxiety could manifest in many indirect ways, and the consideration of the symbolic linguistic style typical of

traditional Samoan cultural signifiers could mean indirect access to understandings of these emotional states. The use of metaphor, expressions, humour and storytelling may be needed to gain awareness of unconscious material.

I propose that the interaction between the individual and their outer worlds underlies the therapeutic relationship and tools for working together instead of a focus on the separation or merge of inner and outer realities. This includes the relationship between therapist and client, in which an intersubjective lens describes a third creation, which allows the experience of being inside the therapeutic relationship and outside of it at the same time. This experience is vital to the openness needed to be able to comprehend alternative understandings of the self.

In wanting to comment on whether it is possible to practice psychodynamic psychotherapy (with an object relational understanding of development) with a Samoan client, I would say that yes it is possible.   But to be done in practice, psychotherapy must not be conducted in strict adherence to object relations theory.   Underlying the therapy must be flexibility between theories of self, with careful consideration of the construction of identity in multiple contexts.

Taboo, *tapu* - Limitations and resistance
During this research project, several themes were difficult to engage with and discuss, although were pervasive in the stories and could be seen in psychoanalytic theory. It is important to note that *Telesā*/*teinesā* are usually considered taboo to discuss in a public setting as spiritual beliefs, genealogical history, meanings of mythology, rituals, chants, songs, dances between generations are usually only discussed within the family in order to avoid the wrath of the *aitu* (spirit) (Shore, 2014). I believe that attitudes towards sharing of this information are slowly changing, for example, the influence of a changing context in which Samoans must often now seek traditional and ancestral information from outside sources, media, public records, etc. as well as family members and elders.   Furthermore, the maintenance of traditional knowledge became difficult due to the politics of the 19th century. Tui Atua claims, "It is difficult now to assess what is legitimate Samoan indigenous knowledge [or] what had to be fabricated as a consequence of political partisanship…" (Tui Atua, 2005, p.64).

Sela-Smith (2002) describes how resistance to any self-search needs to be overcome before total discovery can exist within heuristic research. One of the reasons I found heuristic enquiry difficult at times was my refusal to acknowledge my resistance. I am unsure whether my resistance to exploring and articulating my feelings about religion was totally overcome. Certainly, personal conflicts pervaded all that I chose to acknowledge in the research and include in my writing but

I consciously chose not to include religion due to my feelings about the influence of Christianity on traditional indigenous knowledge. Tui Atua (2004) comments on this influence, "Christianity has effectively demonised the legacy of our Samoan ancestors to a point where their rituals, liturgies and beliefs have been rejected and spurned". Although there continues to be a strong

Christian influence on most Samoan people in New Zealand and around the world, the numbers of those affiliated with religions outside of Christianity are increasing, as well as those who practice no religion at all. According to Statistics New Zealand, 90% of Samoans in New Zealand practiced at least one Christian religion in 2001, compared with 86% in 2006 and 83.4% in 2013 (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). In the latter 20th century however, Tui Atua states Christianity has begun to acknowledge and accommodate the spirituality of indigenous religious culture, which for him "seems reminiscent of the mythological attempt by the siblings to separate and after separation, to unify *lagi* (heaven) and *papa* (earth)… the search for Tagaloa is our legacy" (Tui Atua, 2004). Whether this 'legitimation' of indigenous knowledge is in response to the decline in Christian affiliation, I do not know. However, my point is that there is an historically negative relationship between Christianity and indigenous knowledge, which has an important impact on the Samoan psyche. I tend to agree with Makasiale's comment on the role of religion and culture in the modern Samoan psyche stating "It's imperative that we find a way to distinguish God from culture… We have great reverence for the transcendent being, which is why our souls and hearts keep on working well, but our minds seem to be asleep!" (Makasiale, 2007, p. 79).

A further limitation of this study are the multiple dimensions included for analysis, including the number of sources I have chosen in order to examine the Samoan psyche. These were problematic in that the reading related to a wide range of contexts, for example, Tui Atua's (2002, 2004, 2005, 2008) papers were aimed toward keeping Samoan indigenous practices, rituals and knowledge alive while Peteru and Percival's article was written for those working with Samoan clients in the prevention of sexual violence. Although the wealth of such resources was invaluable, the content of these resources could well have provided a study on the meaning and structure of a Samoan psyche by itself.

Furthermore*, Telesa: The Covenant Keeper*, *Sina and the Eel* and *Tatau Samoa* could not be analysed in great depth, and could not be honoured enough for their respective contributions to my understanding of a Samoan self. Each of these stories contains themes, characters, events and messages that could be analysed further to provide fuller articulations of Samoan identity and self.

I did not specifically employ a Pacific methodology for this research, such as the Talanoa methodology: "Talking about nothing in particular, chat, or gossip and it is within the cultural milieu of Talanoa that knowledge and emotions are shared" (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014, p.1). A prime feature of Talanoa is the empathy that is communicated as an emotional, intersubjective, embodied process between researcher and participant (or in my case, between myself and the texts, discussions with other Pacific researchers, my supervisors, classmates and my relationship with the stories). Talanoa resonates with a psychotherapeutic way of relating, in that the intersubjective nature is a collaborative, interactive and dynamic process which values all elements of communication: "Even silence is far from empty… it requires a deep, interpersonal relationship and emotional sharing between all parties involved" (Farelly &

Nabobo-Baba, 2012, p. 3). It seems that Talanoa, as a mix of intersubjective and Pacific ways of relating would have been an appropriate methodology to examine relationship (even if not between a researcher and a participant per se).

I held guilt about whether it is 'fair' or ethical' to do such research, and using a Pacific methodology would have eased some of this guilt. Perhaps a methodology which understands Samoan ways of relating and was designed to build information through incorporating the linguistic skills mentioned earlier would have rendered different results. My guilt caused much anxiety about whether I have done the right thing, expressed through the following dream;

> **"Dream 22/05/2016: I am in a rush to get to the airport as I'm catching a plane. Anxiety hits as I realise I probably won't make it in time, and when I get there I am told that I have missed my plane to Samoa. Although I am sad I'm not travelling, I also feel relief, that I can enjoy the comforts of home. I receive an angry phone call from an angry Samoan woman stating I am a fake, a phoney and she hangs up. I feel further relief that I am not going on my trip."**

Although I do not regret using the heuristic methodology, I still wonder about how different my study would have looked and what I would have found if I had used Talanoa. Initially, I held the perspective that this study does not require Talanoa, as there were no participants, however, I began to view the stories and Klein herself as participants in the analysis of the psyche. It has been interesting for me to note that viewing the research as a conversation between the psyches may have elicited a different personal process for me.

Further research

As I mentioned above, more interpretations of the influence of Samoan myths and legend on the Samoan psyche would greatly contribute not only to understandings of Samoan indigenous knowledge, but also further exploration and research into Western understandings of Samoan mental processes and mental health. Further research into Melanie Klein's concepts as well as wider contributions within object relations theory in comparison to other indigenous constructs would greatly contribute to ethnopsychoanalysis and intercultural therapy. Additional analysis of the experiences of students in psychoanalytic/psychotherapeutic training from non-Western backgrounds would also greatly contribute to this area.

In conclusion, there is a connection between the psychoanalytic and Samoan psyches, albeit a distant kinship; the relationship between internal and external truths are fluid, neither completely separate nor one and the same. The heuristic methodology has allowed the inclusion of the third subjectivity as a central component to understanding the connection between theories, and indeed the connection between my psychotherapy training and my Samoan cultural self. As a personal journey, this dissertation has assisted me to find pieces of myself and allow them to break apart,

crash and fit together again over and over.   It has been an immensely vulnerable, unpleasant and richly rewarding experience. Karen Lupe, Samoan psychotherapist, summed up this journey well in her discussion of thresholds,

> We are standing at a threshold. The boundaries of this threshold can be described in many ways… the threshold is bound by accommodations that we must make to a dominant culture, and on the other, it is bound by our own understandings of our indigenous reference. (Lupe, 2009, p. 248).

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Glossary

Aiga	Family
Aitu	Spirit, demon
Alga'upu	Expressions
Fa'asinomaga	The ability to seek and get to know oneself and one's role in society as a first step to the development of one's sense of identity
Fa'alotolotolua	Ambivalence
Fa'asinomaga	Identity
Fagogo	Fairy tales, often told at night to children
Failoto	Defiance
Feagaiga	Covenant of sacred relationship, most often in reference to brother and sister
Fealoaloa'i	Mutual respect
Finagalo	Spiritual proclamations
Ilo'ilo	Intellect
Loto	Will/desire,
Mafaufau	Memory and memories
Malofie	Traditional male tattoo
Malu	Traditional female tattoo
Mana	Power
Mana'o	Feelings/emotions/desires
Masalo	Foresight
Mauli	Psyche
Pe'a	Colloquial term for traditional male tattoo
Tagaloa	The name of the principle God, a title conferred on chiefs
Talanoa	Conversation, speak, talk aimlessly, boast, brag
Tapu	Forbidden
Tatau	Tattoo
Teinesā	Beautiful spirit women who are guardians of villages/areas. Teinesā also very jealous of other beautiful women, seduce and charm men.
Telesā	Demon women, who are guardians of earth, and gifted with the elemental powers of Air, Water and Fire
Tofa fa'amagalo	Wisdom based on forgiveness

Tofa fa'amaulalo	Wisdom based on humility
Tofi	Responsibilities, duties
Tuā'oi	Boundaries
Vā	Social space pertaining to relationships
Vā tapuia	Sacred relationships, or space between all things

Appendices

1– Visual expressions of Samoan tatau: malu and malofie/pe'a

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Figure.1: Malu (female tattoo) 'Photo by Greg Semu, 1994-1995'.

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Figure.2: Malofie/Pe'a (male tattoo) 'Self-portrait of Greg Semu- Photo by Greg Semu, 1995'.

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